

# Inspections of safeguarding and looked after children services

Evaluation schedule and grade descriptors

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This evaluation schedule set out the areas of safeguarding and looked after children's services to be inspecting from November 2010. It should be read alongside the framework for the new unannounced inspections of contact, assessment and referral arrangements for children who are in need or who may be in need of protection. The grade descriptors illustrate what outstanding, good, adequate and inadequate are in relation to the judgements made. Grade descriptors are not exhaustive, but illustrate the level of service or outcome linked to that particular grade.

**Age group:** 0–18

**Published:** October 2010

**Reference no:** 100174



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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Evaluation schedule for the safeguarding inspection

### Summary evaluation schedule for the safeguarding inspection

- Overall effectiveness
- Capacity to improve
- Ambition and prioritisation
- Leadership and management taking into account:
  - workforce development
  - user engagement
  - effective use of resources
- Performance management and quality assurance
- Partnership working
- The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe
- Quality of provision taking into account:
  - service responsiveness
  - quality of assessment and direct work with children and families
  - quality of case planning, reviews and recording
- Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people- children and young people are safe and feel safe
- A summary judgement about equality and diversity

### Overall effectiveness

1. Inspectors will consider evidence and judgements from across the evaluation schedule before arriving at the overall effectiveness judgement, taking into account the:
  - extent to which the local authority and its partners are contributing to improving outcomes for children and young people in all aspects of their safeguarding and child protection work
  - extent to which the local authority and its partners are meeting their statutory responsibilities set out in *Working together to safeguard children*<sup>1</sup> and in subsequent revisions, relevant statute and guidance

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<sup>1</sup> *Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*, HM Government 2010:  
[www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/).

- extent to which the leadership and management of those responsible for safeguarding and protecting children and young people deliver effective services are efficient and effective in their use of resources.

### **Capacity to improve**

2. The capacity to make further improvements is a judgement about the ability of the local authority and its partners to continue improving standards and progress based on what it has accomplished so far or to maintain high standards.
3. Judgements about capacity to improve consider how safeguarding and child protection services are planned and managed and the effectiveness of arrangements for delivering improvement. The basis for making this judgement includes the extent to which:
  - the local authority and its partners have a consistent track record of sustained improvement and/or are able to maintain high-quality services
  - improvements in outcomes are linked to improvements in the quality of services
  - the local authority and its partners have a clear vision, ambition and articulate appropriate priorities that will deliver and sustain improvement
  - the local authority has an accurate understanding of their key strengths and weaknesses and plans are in place to build on strengths and remedy weaknesses.

### **Ambition and prioritisation**

4. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
  - the local authority and its partners provide effective and ambitious leadership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across all services
  - local priorities are identified and acted on so that safeguarding outcomes improve and there is ambitious and realistic target setting in relation to safeguarding
  - elected members champion the needs of all children and young people and respond proactively and effectively to their needs.

### **Leadership and management taking into account workforce development; user engagement and effective use of resources**

5. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
  - Commissioning, including joint commissioning of safeguarding and preventative services, is effective

- weaknesses in services and resource deficits are understood and risk assessed and appropriate action taken
- the views of children and young people and parents and carers, including the outcomes of complaints made by children and young people about staff, inform service improvement
- workforce planning ensures that there are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced social workers in place alongside other staff to meet statutory requirements and deliver service priorities
- the workforce plan addresses staffing requirements to meet the needs of the local community and to reflect its diversity
- service planning takes into account the needs of children and young people from minority groups
- the profile of children and young people and their parents and carers is known and used to inform service planning and delivery
- financial resources are used effectively
- action plans have been implemented following serious case reviews and improvements are reflected in practice and service delivery.

### **Performance management and quality assurance**

6. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
  - performance management and evaluation are established across the partnership and lead to systemic and sustained improvements in safeguarding outcomes
  - performance targets are met and achievement is in line with or exceeds similar areas and or nationally
  - managers exercise robust management oversight and offer focused support to staff at all levels
  - management information is used effectively to deliver continuous improvement and to sustain high-quality safeguarding and child protection services that are sensitive to the diverse needs of local communities.

### **Partnership working**

7. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
  - partnership working and communication, at all levels, including across the voluntary and community sectors is well established and promotes safeguarding
  - the Local Safeguarding Children Board fulfils its statutory duties and provides effective community and professional leadership in relation to universal, targeted and specialist safeguarding services

- partnerships with stakeholders, relevant community groups and commissioned services are reflected in strategic planning and have led to improvements in outcomes, service design and the quality and equity of delivery
- appropriate, clear and agreed thresholds for access to services, for children in need and children at risk of harm, are well embedded, understood and implemented across the partnership and reviewed regularly.

### **The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe**

8. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
- health partners assure themselves that children and young people are adequately safeguarded
  - health partners communicate with children, young people and their carers to ensure that they:
    - understand the care, treatment and support available to them
    - can express their views and involved in making decisions about their care and support
    - have their views and experience taken into account in the way the service is provided and delivered
  - health partners provide health support to children with disabilities and safeguarding arrangements are in place to support this vulnerable group of children and young people
  - health partners demonstrate that their arrangements for safeguarding are sensitive to the diverse needs of all children
  - health partners support teenagers who are pregnant in order to identify risk and safeguard the well-being of the family
  - front-line community health staff help children stay healthy and safe
  - health partners demonstrate compliance with *Statutory Guidance for the Health of Looked after Children 2009*<sup>2</sup> and *Working Together 2010*
  - health partners demonstrate effective involvement with partners including the Local Safeguarding Children Board
  - front line health staff work in partnership with social care and other providers to identify children at risk and contribute to their ongoing support and care
  - general practitioners fulfil their responsibilities in safeguarding

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<sup>2</sup> *Statutory Guidance for the Health of Looked after Children 2009*, Department of Health; [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_108501](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_108501).

- health partners ensure that children who have been subjected to alleged sexual abuse are examined and assessed in a suitable environment by appropriately trained staff
- arrangements are in place in adult and paediatric emergency departments to identify children who are at risk and to communicate concerns with social care partners (to include walk in centres and urgent care centres)

**Quality of provision taking into account service responsiveness; quality of assessment and direct work with children and families; quality of case planning, reviews and recording**

9. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- early preventative services are effective in safeguarding children and appropriately diverting them from statutory provision
- referrals are responded to in a timely and appropriate manner and there is appropriate risk assessment and prioritisation of referrals
- cases are allocated promptly, where required to qualified and experienced social workers
- assessments are effective and include:
  - a robust analysis of risk and protective factors impacting on children’s safety and welfare are identified well
  - the impact of decisions and plans on outcomes for children and their families
  - how far the particular needs of children are taken into consideration (disability, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and language)
  - the extent and effectiveness of partner agency engagement
  - the involvement of children and their families
- assessments are timely and involve other professionals appropriately
- plans are clear, robust and identify the intended outcomes for children and young people
- rigorous and timely monitoring and review of cases ensures that the service responds to changing needs of the child and family and reassesses risk of harm accordingly
- record-keeping is routinely up to date and supports high-quality practice. It demonstrates sound assessment, decision-making and effective planning and implementation. All decisions and actions are recorded.



## Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people – children and young people are safe and feel safe

10. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- the role and the function of the local authority designated officer is effectively utilised to ensure that children are properly safeguarded
- the service learns from complaints
- processes to ensure safe recruitment meet statutory minimum requirements
- the safeguarding and child protection needs of children and young people are identified and responded to effectively and in a timely way
- positive educational outcomes for vulnerable children are effective in safeguarding children
- safeguarding provision is judged to be effective in local authority children's homes, fostering, adoption and private fostering services
- children and young people report that their views and feelings are taken into account and inform assessments and planning undertaken through common assessment, child in need and child protection arrangements
- where safeguarding concerns about a child are identified, effective and coordinated work is undertaken, taking into account issues of diversity, and children and young people understand what is happening to them, at a level that is appropriate for their age and understanding
- surveys undertaken indicate that children feel safe and that almost all know where to access help and advice if they need it.

### A summary judgement about equality and diversity

11. Equality and diversity is a critical aspect across the evaluation schedule and will be reported on throughout the inspection report and taken into account across all judgement areas. Given the importance of this aspect of practice, inspectors will also make a summary equality and diversity judgement in the judgement table.

### Grade descriptors

#### Overall effectiveness

<p><b>Outstanding</b> Grade: 1</p>	<p>Overall effectiveness is likely to be outstanding when leadership at all levels across the partnership is active, visible and effective in sustaining high-quality safeguarding services and outcomes for children and young people. Change is implemented very effectively and delivers clear benefits to service users. Quality assurance and performance management are comprehensive, systematic and demonstrably effective. There are the people, skills and capability in place (including sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced social workers) throughout safeguarding and child protection services to</p>
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	maintain high-quality services. Partnership with stakeholders, community groups and commissioned services are effective across all aspects of safeguarding provision. All children and young people receiving services are aware of how to complain and make representations and have easy access to advocacy services. There is highly effective use of resources.
<b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b>	Overall effectiveness is likely to be good when those responsible for the leadership and management of safeguarding and child protection have identified and secured demonstrable improvements to services which contribute to improving outcomes for children and young people. Leadership results in a shared vision and agreed priorities for improvement. Targets for improving services are ambitious and most are met. Change is implemented effectively and delivers clear benefits to service users. Quality assurance and performance management systems have led to improvements in service provision. Workforce planning and knowledge, learning and development are effective in securing a skilled, capable and knowledgeable workforce (including sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced social workers). The views of children and young people and their parents and carers contribute routinely to planning and evaluating the effectiveness of provision and inform service improvements. Partnership with stakeholders, community groups and commissioned services are effective. There is sustained satisfaction from service users with the quality of service delivery. There is effective use of resources.
<b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b>	Overall effectiveness is likely to be adequate when statutory requirements are at least met and managers have a track record of achieving some improvements in service provision. No services are deteriorating. Effective plans are in place to improve the contribution by the council and its partners to better outcomes for children and young people. Quality assurance and performance management processes are effective. The views of children and young people contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of some provision and inform service improvements. Staffing resources, including the number of qualified and experienced social workers, are sufficient to deliver the service area priorities. Processes for recruitment and retention of staff are effective. Knowledge, learning and development meet the development needs of the majority of staff. Partnerships with stakeholders, community groups and commissioned services are effective. Financial plans are in place.
<b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b>	The overall effectiveness judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

## Capacity to improve

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have a consistent track record of sustained improvement and/or are able to maintain high-quality services</li> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have a clear vision, ambition and articulate appropriate priorities that will deliver and sustain improvement</li> <li>■ workforce planning and development are effective leading to significant improvement of the effectiveness of the work force to safeguard children</li> <li>■ there is effective service-user engagement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have a track record of improvement</li> <li>■ improvements in outcomes are linked to improvements in the quality of services</li> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have ambition and articulate appropriate priorities</li> <li>■ planning is effective</li> <li>■ workforce planning and development are effective</li> <li>■ there is evidence of service-user engagement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

## Ambition and prioritisation

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ senior officers ensure staff from across the council and its partners</li> </ul>
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	contribute to the planning and delivery of key priorities and to the achievement of sustainable and excellent outcomes
<b>Good Grade: 2</b>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ elected members champion the needs of all children and young people and respond proactively and effectively to their needs</li> <li>■ the local authority and its partners provide effective and ambitious leadership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across all services</li> <li>■ local priorities are identified and acted on so that safeguarding outcomes improve and there is ambitious and realistic target setting in relation to safeguarding.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate Grade: 3</b>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ vision and ambition is shared and understood by most staff groups and priorities are only beginning to emerge on the basis of a clear analysis of need.</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate Grade: 4</b>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

## Leadership and management

<b>Outstanding Grade: 1</b>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <p>There are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ staffing and resource capacity are used effectively to respond to new demands</li> <li>■ outcomes for children and young people from minority groups are good overall and at least consistent with those of all other children and young people in the area.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded, for example, targets are ambitious as well as being realistic and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the workforce plan reflects the diversity of the population</li> <li>■ service users report a high level of satisfaction with the quality of services</li> <li>■ the views of children and young people and parents and carers, including the outcomes of complaints made by children and young people, about staff inform service improvement</li> <li>■ commissioning including joint commissioning of safeguarding services and preventative services is effective including balance of cost and quality.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ reviewing risks of harm to all children and young people is a part of planning, delivery and review</li> <li>■ weaknesses in services and resource deficits are understood and risk assessed and appropriate action taken</li> <li>■ there is a well established complaints and representations process which is valued by children and young people</li> <li>■ workforce planning ensures that there are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced social workers in place alongside other staff to meet statutory requirements and deliver service priorities</li> <li>■ service planning takes into account the needs of children and young people from minority groups</li> <li>■ action plans have been implemented following serious case reviews and improvements are reflected in practice and service delivery</li> <li>■ financial resources are used effectively</li> <li>■ user feedback is analysed differentially for equality and diversity</li> <li>■ the workforce plan addresses staffing requirements to meet the needs of the local community</li> <li>■ the profile of children and young people, and their parents and carers, is known and used to inform service planning and delivery.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

### Performance management and quality assurance

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for</li> </ul>
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	<p>children and young people.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ effective use is made of internal evaluation and external challenge to identify and address pressure points and improve safeguarding services and outcomes for children and young people</li> <li>■ management information is used effectively to deliver continuous improvement and to sustain high-quality safeguarding and child protection services that are sensitive to the diverse needs of local communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Grade: 2</b>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ performance management and evaluation are established across the partnership and lead to improvements in safeguarding outcomes</li> <li>■ senior managers exercise management oversight and offer focused support to staff at all levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate Grade: 3</b>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ performance targets are met and achievement is in line with or exceeds similar areas and or nationally</li> <li>■ performance management and evaluation arrangements are in place and lead to improvements in safeguarding outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate Grade: 4</b>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

## Partnerships

<b>Outstanding Grade: 1</b>	<p>The partnership judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the Local Safeguarding Children Board demonstrates high levels of influence across all areas where the safety and welfare of children and young people need to be considered.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The partnership judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ partnerships with stakeholders, relevant community groups and commissioned services are reflected in strategic planning and have led to improvements in outcomes, service design and the quality and equity of delivery.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The partnership judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ most partners are engaged and partnership working and communication, at all levels, including across the voluntary and community sectors promotes safeguarding</li> <li>■ the Local Safeguarding Children Board fulfils statutory duties and provides effective community and professional leadership in relation to universal, targeted and specialist safeguarding services</li> <li>■ information-sharing protocols are established across the partnership with regular open and appropriate exchange.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The partnership judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

### The contribution of health agencies to safeguarding children and young people

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The health agencies contribution judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ information is shared swiftly and effectively between emergency care services and community providers, including GPs</li> <li>■ there is clear evidence of proactive assessment and effective, consistent referral arrangements from all community and acute health providers</li> <li>■ all staff have up-to-date multi-agency training appropriate to their role and all staff are in receipt of regular supervision to support them in their role</li> <li>■ the health agencies can evidence flexible and innovative programmes that demonstrate sustained improvements in outcomes for children and young people.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The health agencies contribution judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ health partners demonstrate effective communication with children, young people and their carers to ensure that they have their views and</li> </ul>

	<p>experience taken into account in the way the service is provided and delivered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ front line health staff work proactively in partnership with social care and other providers to identify children at risk and contribute to their ongoing support and care</li> <li>■ arrangements are in place in adult services (including Accident and Emergency and unscheduled care centres, mental health and substance misuse services) to identify and monitor children who might be at greater risk of abuse by adults who use health services</li> <li>■ the skill mix in health visitor and school nursing teams enables the full delivery of the Healthy Child programme.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The health agencies contribution is likely to be adequate if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ health partners have up to date, monitored policies and procedures for identifying and communicating concerns about child protection issues</li> <li>■ health partners demonstrate effective communication with children, young people and their carers to ensure that they <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- understand the care, treatment and support available to them</li> <li>- can express their views and involved in making decisions about their care and support</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ health partners support teenagers who are pregnant and young fathers in order to identify risk and safeguard the well-being of the family</li> <li>■ health partners demonstrate that their arrangements for safeguarding are sensitive to the diverse needs of all children</li> <li>■ staffing numbers in the school nursing and health visiting teams comply with the requirements of <i>Working Together</i> and help children stay healthy and safe</li> <li>■ at least 80% of staff in provider organisations have received appropriate training in child protection and effective supervision policies are in place</li> <li>■ health partners demonstrate effective involvement with partners including the Local Safeguarding Children Board</li> <li>■ General Practitioners have received appropriate, up-to-date training in child protection and participate in ongoing supervision in order to fulfil their responsibilities in safeguarding</li> <li>■ health partners ensure that children who have been subjected to alleged sexual abuse are examined and assessed in a suitable environment by appropriately trained staff</li> <li>■ emergency care settings have appropriately trained staff and effective procedures to recognise, assess and make appropriate referrals for children or young people who may be at risk of abuse</li> <li>■ health partners provide effective health support to children with disabilities and their families and safeguarding arrangements are in place to support this vulnerable group of children and young people.</li> </ul>



<b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b>	<p>The health agencies judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately safeguarded.</li> </ul>
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**Quality of provision including service responsiveness, assessment, case planning, reviews and recording**

<b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ referrals are responded to in a timely and appropriate manner and there is appropriate risk assessment and prioritisation of referrals</li> <li>■ assessments include a robust analysis, and plans include clear and appropriate objectives. Risk and protective factors impacting on children’s safety and welfare are identified well.</li> </ul>
<b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ thresholds are well embedded and are reviewed and updated regularly</li> <li>■ early preventative services are effective in safeguarding children and appropriately diverting them from statutory provision</li> <li>■ management oversight is strong and effective</li> <li>■ cases are allocated promptly, where required to qualified and experienced social workers</li> <li>■ plans are clear, robust and identify the intended outcomes for children and young people</li> <li>■ reviews and monitoring of cases ensures that the service responds to changing needs of the child and family and reassesses risk of harm accordingly</li> <li>■ recording demonstrates that the plan is being fully implemented. Most decisions and actions are recorded</li> <li>■ children and young people, and their parents and carers, report that their needs are understood in the context of their culture, religion and identity.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ suitably appropriate, clear and agreed thresholds for access to services for children in need are understood and implemented across the partnership</li> <li>■ assessments demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the impact of decisions and plans on outcomes for children and their families</li> <li>- how far the particular needs of children are taken into consideration</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>(disability, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and language)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the extent and effectiveness of partner agency engagement</li> <li>- the involvement of children and their families</li> <li>■ assessments are timely and involve other professionals appropriately</li> <li>■ record keeping is up to date and supports practice. It demonstrates sound assessment, decision-making, including decisions made in supervision, and effective planning</li> <li>■ children and young people, and their parents and carers, report that they are treated with dignity and respect.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

### Safeguarding outcomes- children and young people are safe and feel safe

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The safeguarding outcomes judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice which may include examples of innovative practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved safeguarding outcomes for children and young people</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ effective and ongoing work engages children and young people and their parents or carers; their views are sought on a wide range of safeguarding issues and action is taken to tackle issues that children and young people may have.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The safeguarding outcomes judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ safeguarding provision is judged good or better in service, setting and institutional inspections</li> <li>■ children and young people report that their views and feelings are taken into account and inform nearly all assessments and planning undertaken through common assessment, child in need and child protection arrangements</li> <li>■ positive educational outcomes for vulnerable children are effective in safeguarding children</li> <li>■ where safeguarding concerns about a child are identified, effective and coordinated work is undertaken taking into account issues of diversity and children and young people mostly understand what is happening to them according to their age and understanding.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The safeguarding outcomes judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the role and function of the local authority designated officer is utilised to ensure that children are properly safeguarded</li> <li>■ statutory guidelines in relation to complaints made against staff working with children are consistently followed</li> <li>■ processes to ensure safe recruitment meet statutory minimum requirements</li> <li>■ safeguarding provision is judged adequate or better in service, setting and institutional inspections</li> <li>■ surveys undertaken indicate that children largely feel safe and that almost all know where to access help and advice if they need it.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The safeguarding outcomes judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

## Evaluation schedule for the looked after children inspection

### Overview of summary evaluation schedule for the looked after children inspection

- Overall effectiveness
- Capacity to improve
- Ambition and prioritisation
- Leadership and management taking into account:
  - workforce development
  - partnerships
  - effective use of resources
- Performance management and quality assurance
- Quality of provision taking into account:
  - service responsiveness
  - quality of assessment and direct work with children and families
  - quality of case planning, reviews and recording

## Overview of outcomes for looked after children and young people

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution including user engagement
- Achieving economic well-being

## Overview of a summary judgement on equality and diversity

### Overall effectiveness

12. Inspectors will consider evidence and judgements from across the evaluation schedule before arriving at the overall effectiveness judgement, taking into account the:
- extent to which the local authority and its partners meet statutory responsibilities to looked after children and care leavers
  - the extent to which the local authority, as corporate parent, and its partners are contributing to improving outcomes for looked after children and care leavers in relation to:
    - being healthy
    - staying safe
    - enjoying and achieving
    - making a positive contribution
    - achieving economic well-being.
  - the extent to which the leadership and management of the local authority and its partners delivers services that provide effective use of resources

### Capacity to improve

13. The capacity to make further improvements is a judgement about the ability of the local authority and its partners to continue improving standards and progress based on what it has accomplished so far or to maintain high standards.

14. Judgements about capacity to improve consider how looked after children services are planned and managed and the effectiveness of arrangements for delivering improvement. The basis for making this judgement includes the extent to which:
- the local authority and its partners have a consistent track record of sustained improvement and/or are able to maintain high-quality services
  - improvements in outcomes are linked to improvements in the quality of services
  - the local authority and its partners have a clear vision, ambition and articulate appropriate priorities that will sustain improvement
  - the local authority has an accurate understanding of their key strengths and weaknesses and plans are in place to build on strengths and remedy weaknesses.

### **Ambition and prioritisation**

15. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
- the local authority and its partners provide effective and ambitious leadership to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after children across all services
  - local priorities are identified and acted on so that safeguarding outcomes improve and there is ambitious and realistic target setting in relation to looked after children
  - elected members and corporate parents champion the needs of all looked after children and young people and respond proactively and effectively to their needs.

### **Leadership and management taking into account workforce development; partnerships and effective use of resources**

16. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
- commissioning, including joint commissioning of looked after children and services for children on the edge of care, is established across the local authority and its partners and is monitored effectively
  - weaknesses in services and resource deficits are understood and risk assessed and the local authority can meet the requirements of the sufficiency duty
  - workforce planning ensures that there are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced social workers in place alongside other staff to deliver service priorities and to maintain high-quality looked after children services
  - the workforce plan addresses staffing requirements to meet the needs of the local community and to reflect its diversity

- outcomes for looked after children and young people from minority groups are at least consistent with those of all other children and young people in the area and the attainment gap is being significantly closed
- the profile of children and young people and their parents and carers is known and used to inform service planning and delivery
- financial resources are used effectively.

### **Performance management and quality assurance**

17. In order to make their judgement, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- performance management and evaluation are established across the partnership and lead to systemic and sustained improvements in outcomes for looked after children and young people
- performance targets are met and achievement is in line with or exceeds similar areas and or nationally
- managers exercise robust management oversight and offer focused support to staff at all levels
- management information is used effectively to deliver continuous improvement and to sustain high-quality looked after children services that are sensitive to the diverse needs of local communities.

### **Quality of provision taking into account service responsiveness; quality of assessment and direct work with children and young people; quality of case planning, reviews and recording**

18. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- decisions and action are timely and ensure that children and young people who need to be looked after are in appropriate placements
- there are clear and agreed processes for assessing risk and decision-making regarding whether a child needs to be looked after or remain in care, and these are well embedded, understood and implemented consistently across the partnership
- assessments result in a comprehensive understanding of the needs of looked after children and routinely include the views of children and their parents/carers
- assessment and case planning demonstrate how far the particular needs of children are taken into consideration (disability, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and language)
- all plans for looked after children and care leavers are comprehensive and underpinned by thorough needs assessment and analysis and are implemented, monitored and evaluated

- plans effectively address consideration of permanent alternative placement or return home where appropriate
- plans are regularly reviewed to ensure timely interventions and progress against outcome goals and that there is no drift in care for a looked after child
- unplanned changes of placement are avoided
- children and young people have sustained appropriate relationships with professionals who know them well and care about them
- records are up to date and support effective practice.

## **Outcomes for looked after children**

### **Being healthy**

19. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- innovative and accessible multi-agency targeting, planning, reviewing and monitoring of health services for all looked after children and care leavers have led to a sustained upward trend or high performance in outcomes for physical, emotional and sexual health
- effective information-sharing across agencies ensures consistency in meeting the health needs of looked after children and care leavers
- looked after children and care leavers have access to a comprehensive health needs assessment which they are encouraged to attend which address their diverse needs (disability, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and language)
- targeted health promotion services are in place for looked after children and care leavers
- arrangements are in place to ensure that looked after children and care leavers can achieve timely access to health services, including specialist services, when required
- health outcomes for looked after children and care leavers are better than in similar areas/authorities
- looked after children placed out of authority receive healthcare that addresses their physical and emotional needs.

### **Staying safe**

20. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- risk is managed to ensure that all children and young people who need to be looked after are in care

- thorough arrangements for monitoring care placements, including those outside of the local area, have an impact on improving safeguarding outcomes for all looked after children
- all agencies are actively engaged and held to account for their responsibilities in delivering quality services to safeguard the welfare of looked after children and care leavers
- children are placed in provision judged to be adequate or better including those placed out of area
- looked after children live in stable placements which provide high-quality care and support.

### **Enjoying and achieving**

21. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- looked after children and care leavers have effective support to access the best possible education to meet their particular needs and are fully included in school life
- attendance is above average and fixed-term and permanent exclusion rates are low compared to other looked after children and are comparable with rates for all children
- looked after children make good progress in relation to their starting point, underpinned by effective and up-to-date personal education plans that have been agreed with the child's full involvement; their progress at school is carefully monitored and action taken when there are concerns
- the performance gap in attainment between looked after children in the authority and the national average for all children and young people has narrowed significantly
- work to narrow the gap is effective and positively takes account of children's diverse backgrounds
- monitoring arrangements for looked after children and care leavers educated outside the area ensure that they are supported well and achieve well
- looked after children and care leavers have access to a range of leisure activities of their choice
- positive action overcomes barriers to participation.

### **Making a positive contribution including user engagement**

22. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- looked after children and care leavers are supported to develop effective communication skills and speak out on issues that matter to them



- an effective and valued looked after children in care council (or equivalent) is in place
- the views of looked after children and care leavers routinely inform training and evaluation. Their involvement has led to a sustained and significant improvement in service provision
- looked after children and care leavers report a consistently high level of satisfaction with the quality of services
- feedback from looked after children and young people is analysed differentially for equality and diversity
- there is a well established complaints and representations process which is valued and used by children and young people and leads to service improvement
- children and young people are aware how to complain, encouraged and supported by an advocate where appropriate
- multi-agency action to prevent offending and re-offending is well embedded, has led to significant reductions in offending and has improved life chances for those at risk.

### **Achieving economic well-being**

23. In order to make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- the performance gap between looked after children and the national average for all pupils post-16 has closed significantly or been eradicated
- care leavers receive effective support to access high-quality provision including appropriate vocational options that enables them to continue their education or training post-16 or enter employment
- care leavers have high aspirations and a high proportion are achieving well in further and higher education
- care leavers, including older care leavers, contribute routinely to their pathway plan reviews
- pathway plans including transition planning for looked after children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities address all young people's needs including those concerning their disability, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and language as appropriate
- care leavers are positive about the plans in place to support their transition to adulthood
- care leavers have access to a range of high-quality permanent and affordable accommodation which meets their needs.

## A summary judgement about equality and diversity

Equality and diversity is a critical aspect across the evaluation schedule and will be reported on throughout the inspection report and taken into account across all judgement areas. Given the importance of this aspect of practice, inspectors will also make a summary equality and diversity judgement in the judgement table.

### Grade descriptors

#### Overall effectiveness

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>Overall effectiveness is likely to be outstanding when there is a sustained history of delivering effective innovative solutions to problems which result in improved outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. Leadership at all levels across the partnership is active, visible and effective. Performance management is comprehensive, systematic and demonstrably effective.</p> <p>There are the people, skills and capability in place for looked after children and care leavers to maintain high-quality services. All looked after children and care leavers are aware of how to complain and make representations and have easy access to advocacy services. Statutory guidelines in relation to complaints made against staff working with children are incorporated into a local policy which is implemented in full, is user-friendly and consistently followed.</p> <p>Looked after children and care leavers, and their parents and carers, are involved in all aspects of planning and intervention and have opportunities to contribute to key strategic processes. The council and its partners set ambitious targets for improving services and achieve almost all of these.</p>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>Overall effectiveness is likely to be good when those responsible for the leadership and management of services for looked after children and care leavers have identified and secured demonstrable improvements to services which contribute to improving outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>Leadership results in a shared vision and agreed priorities for improvement.</p> <p>Trends demonstrate sustained improvement in the quality of services. Targets for improving services are ambitious and most are met. Change is implemented effectively and delivers clear benefits to service users.</p> <p>Quality assurance and performance management systems have led to improvements in service provision.</p> <p>Workforce planning and knowledge, learning and development are effective in securing a skilled, capable and knowledgeable workforce.</p> <p>The views of looked after children and care leavers, and their parents and carers, contribute routinely to planning and evaluating the effectiveness of provision and inform service improvements.</p> <p>Partnership with stakeholders, community groups and commissioned services are effective. There is sustained satisfaction from service</p>

	users with the quality of service delivery. There is effective use of resources.
<b>Adequate Grade: 3</b>	<p>Overall effectiveness is likely to be adequate when statutory requirements are met. Managers have a track record of achieving some improvements in service provision. No services are deteriorating. Effective plans are in place to improve the contribution by the council and its partners to better outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. Quality assurance and performance management processes are effective. The views of looked after children and care leavers contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of some provision and inform service improvements.</p> <p>Staffing resources are sufficient to deliver the service area priorities. Processes for recruitment and retention of staff are effective. Knowledge, learning and development meet the development needs of the majority staff.</p> <p>Partnerships with stakeholders, community groups and commissioned services are effective. Financial plans are in place.</p>
<b>Inadequate Grade: 4</b>	<p>The overall effectiveness judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

### Capacity to improve

<b>Outstanding Grade: 1</b>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for looked after children and young people.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Grade: 2</b>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have a consistent track record of sustained improvement and/or are able to maintain high-quality services</li> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have a clear vision, ambition and articulate appropriate priorities that will sustain improvement</li> <li>■ workforce planning and development are effective leading to significant improvement of the effectiveness of the work force to safeguard looked after children's welfare</li> <li>■ there is effective service user engagement.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate Grade: 3</b>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have a track record of improvement</li> <li>■ improvements in outcomes are linked to improvements in the</li> </ul>

	<p>quality of services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the local authority and its partners have ambition and articulate appropriate priorities</li> <li>■ planning is effective</li> <li>■ workforce planning and development are effective</li> <li>■ there is evidence of service-user engagement.</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate Grade: 4</b>	<p>The capacity to improve judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

### Ambition and prioritisation

<b>Outstanding Grade: 1</b>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for all looked after children and young people.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ senior officers ensure staff from across the council and its partners contribute to the planning and delivery of key priorities and to the achievement of sustainable and excellent outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Grade: 2</b>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ elected members and corporate parents champion the needs of all looked after children and young people and respond proactively and effectively to their needs</li> <li>■ the local authority and its partners provide effective and ambitious leadership to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after children across all services</li> <li>■ local priorities are identified and acted on so that outcomes improve and there is ambitious and realistic target setting in relation to looked after children.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate Grade: 3</b>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ vision and ambition is shared and understood by most staff groups and priorities are only beginning to emerge on the basis of a clear analysis of need.</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate Grade: 4</b>	<p>The ambition and prioritisation judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ looked after children and young people are inadequately protected and at risk of significant harm.</li> </ul>

## Leadership and management

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ outcomes for children and young people from minority groups are good overall and at least consistent with those of all other children and young people in the area and the attainment gap is being significantly closed</li> <li>■ staffing and resource capacity are used effectively to respond to new demands.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded, for example, targets are ambitious as well as being realistic and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the workforce plan reflects the diversity of the population</li> <li>■ partnerships with stakeholders, relevant community groups and commissioned services have led to improvements in service design and delivery and outcomes.</li> <li>■ the outcomes of complaints, including those made by children and young people about staff, and concerns raised about services are systematically used to inform service development</li> <li>■ service users report a consistently high level of satisfaction with the quality of services</li> <li>■ commissioning, including joint commissioning of looked after children services is effective including balance of cost and quality</li> <li>■ cross-agency partnerships for looked after children and care leavers are highly effective and improve outcomes</li> <li>■ the views of children and care leavers and parents and carers inform service improvement</li> <li>■ children and young people are aware how to complain, are appropriately encouraged and supported by an advocate where necessary.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the local authority and the partnership provide strong, visible leadership to looked after children and care leavers services</li> <li>■ local priorities are identified and acted on so that outcomes improve and there is extensive, ambitious and realistic target setting in relation to looked after children</li> <li>■ weaknesses in services and resource deficits are understood and risk assessed and appropriate action taken</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ workforce planning ensures that there are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced social workers in place alongside other staff to meet statutory requirements and deliver service priorities</li> <li>■ productive partnerships with key stakeholders areas are established</li> <li>■ there is a well established complaints and representations process which is valued by children and young people</li> <li>■ statutory guidelines in relation to complaints made against staff working with children are consistently followed</li> <li>■ the workforce plan addresses staffing requirements to meet the needs of the local community</li> <li>■ the profile of children and young people, and their parents and carers, is known and used to inform service planning and delivery</li> <li>■ resource deficits are understood and risk assessed and are consistent with the sufficiency duty</li> <li>■ user feedback is analysed differentially for equality and diversity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The leadership and management judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

### Performance management and quality assurance

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after</li> <li>■ effective use is made of internal evaluation and external challenge to identify and address pressure points and improve looked after children services and outcomes for children and young people</li> <li>■ management information is used effectively to deliver continuous improvement and to sustain high-quality looked after children services that are sensitive to the diverse needs of local communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ performance management and evaluation are established</li> </ul>

	<p>across the partnership and lead to improvements in outcomes for looked after children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ senior managers exercise robust management oversight and offer focused support to staff at all levels.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ performance targets are met and achievement is in line with, or exceeds, similar areas and or nationally</li> <li>■ performance management and evaluation arrangements are in place and lead to improvements in looked after children's outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The performance management and quality assurance judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

**Quality of provision taking into account service responsiveness; quality of assessment and direct work with children and families; quality of case planning, reviews and recording**

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ clear and agreed processes for assessing risk and decision-making regarding whether a child needs to be admitted to, and remain in, care are in place and these are well embedded, understood and implemented consistently across the partnership</li> <li>■ all plans for looked after children and care leavers are comprehensive and underpinned by thorough needs assessment and analysis and are implemented, monitored and evaluated</li> <li>■ planning ensures that there is no drift in care for a looked after child</li> <li>■ all decisions and actions are recorded</li> <li>■ decisions and action are timely and ensure that children and young people who need to be looked after are accommodated appropriately</li> <li>■ support to those on the edge of care results in good decisions to only look after those with needs that can be best met through care provision</li> <li>■ plans are regularly reviewed to ensure timely interventions and progress against outcome goals.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ children and young people have sustained relationships with professionals who know them well and care about them</li> <li>■ records support high-quality practice</li> <li>■ children and young people, and their parents and carers, report that their needs are understood in the context of their culture, religion and identity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the changing needs of looked after children and care leavers are routinely monitored to ensure that the services provided meet these needs effectively</li> <li>■ assessments result in a comprehensive understanding of the needs of looked after children and routinely include the views of children and their parents/carers</li> <li>■ plans effectively address consideration of permanent alternative placement or return home where appropriate</li> <li>■ unplanned changes of placement are avoided</li> <li>■ records are up to date</li> <li>■ children and young people, and their parents and carers, report that they are treated with dignity and respect.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>The quality of provision judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

## Outcomes for looked after children

### Being healthy

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice which may include examples of innovative practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ innovative and accessible multi-agency targeting, planning, reviewing and monitoring of health services for all looked after children and care leavers have led to a sustained upward trend or high performance in outcomes for physical, emotional and sexual health</li> <li>■ arrangements are in place to ensure that looked after children and care leavers can achieve timely access health services, including</li> </ul>
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	specialist services, when required.
<b>Good Grade: 2</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ effective information-sharing across agencies ensures consistency in meeting the health needs of looked after children and care leavers</li> <li>■ health outcomes for looked after children and care leavers are better than in similar areas/authorities.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate Grade: 3</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers have access to a comprehensive health needs assessment which they are encouraged to attend which address their diverse needs (disability, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and language)</li> <li>■ targeted health promotion services are in place for looked after children and care leavers</li> <li>■ clear and effective systems are in place to ensure that looked after children placed out of authority receive healthcare that addresses their physical and emotional needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate Grade: 4</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

## Staying safe

<b>Outstanding Grade: 1</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there is sufficient choice to meet local need, with regulatory inspections showing good and outstanding provision</li> <li>■ thorough arrangements for monitoring care placements, including those outside of the local area, have an impact on improving safeguarding outcomes for all looked after children.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Grade: 2</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ risk is managed to ensure that all children and young people who need to be in care are in care</li> <li>■ all agencies are actively engaged and held to account for their responsibilities in delivering quality services.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ arrangements for monitoring care placements, have an impact on improving safeguarding outcomes for looked after children</li> <li>■ information, support and guidance are targeted to need</li> <li>■ looked after children live in stable placements which provide high-quality care and support.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

### Enjoying and achieving

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers have good support to access the best possible education to meet their particular needs and are fully included in school life</li> <li>■ partners have very high aspirations for looked after children and care leavers</li> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers have access to good leisure activities of their choice</li> <li>■ promoting access to leisure and recreation is high priority</li> <li>■ positive action overcomes barriers to participation</li> <li>■ work to narrow the gap is effective and positively takes account of children's diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attendance is above average and fixed-term and permanent exclusion rates are low compared to other looked after children and are comparable with rates for all children</li> <li>■ looked after children make good progress in relation to their starting point, underpinned by effective and up-to-date personal education plans that have been agreed with the child's full involvement</li> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers' achievement is above that of similar areas</li> <li>■ the performance gap in attainment between looked after children and the national average for all children and young people has narrowed significantly</li> <li>■ monitoring arrangements for looked after children and care leavers</li> </ul>

	educated outside the area ensure that they are supported well and achieve well.
<b>Adequate Grade: 3</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the progress made by looked after children and care leavers is regularly monitored and individual targets set</li> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers achieve at least in line with those in similar authorities and make adequate or better progress in line with their starting points</li> <li>■ looked after children enjoy stable education, particularly during examination time</li> <li>■ all looked after children have an up-to-date personal education plan that is regularly monitored</li> <li>■ support and monitoring arrangements for children educated outside the area are in place</li> <li>■ looked after children who are excluded have timely access to full-time education or receive full-time alternative learning and/or vocational programmes that meet their needs</li> <li>■ looked after children benefit from out-of-hours learning opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate Grade: 4</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

### **Making a positive contribution including user engagement**

<b>Outstanding Grade: 1</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the views of looked after children and care leavers routinely inform quality assurance, training and evaluation. Their involvement has led to a sustained and significant improvement in service provision</li> <li>■ multi-agency action to prevent offending and re-offending is well embedded, has led to significant reductions and improved life chances for those at risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Grade: 2</b>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers report their needs are met well and the support they receive improves social and emotional well-being, including at key transition points.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers are supported to develop effective communication skills and speak out on issues that matter to them</li> <li>■ a strong and active looked after children local authority (or equivalent) has developed a pledge for children in care and actively monitors its progress and relevance</li> <li>■ looked after children and care leavers are supported and encouraged to be involved with activities such as recruiting staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>

### Achieving economic well-being

<p><b>Outstanding</b> <b>Grade: 1</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be outstanding if all the requirements for a good judgement are met and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there are instances of highly effective practice across most areas evaluated that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people looked after.</li> </ul> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the performance gap between looked after children and the national average for all pupils post-16 has closed significantly or been eradicated</li> <li>■ care leavers have high aspirations and a high proportion are achieving well in further and higher education.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good</b> <b>Grade: 2</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be good if all the requirements for an adequate judgement are met and some of those requirements are exceeded and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ pathway plans are of high quality and comprehensive including transition planning for looked after children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receiving services is thorough, timely and regularly evaluated to ensure smooth transition to adult services and further education, employment or training</li> <li>■ outcomes for economic well-being are above those in similar areas</li> <li>■ care leavers receive effective support to access high-quality provision that enables them to continue their education or training post-16</li> <li>■ care leavers have access to a range of high-quality permanent and affordable accommodation which meets their needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adequate</b> <b>Grade: 3</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be adequate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the 14–19 curriculum for care leavers offers a wide range of well-matched vocational options</li> <li>■ care leavers, including older care leavers, contribute routinely to their pathway plan reviews</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ care leavers are positive about the plans in place to support their transition to adulthood</li> <li>■ pathway plans take into account needs arising from disability, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and language as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inadequate</b> <b>Grade: 4</b></p>	<p>This outcome judgement is likely to be inadequate if it fails to meet the requirements for an adequate judgement, or if there are significant failures to comply with requirements and as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the outcomes for children and young people looked after are inadequate or their welfare is not safeguarded.</li> </ul>